

THE LAND GIRL



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PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

THERE has probably never been a time when the young were not bored by their elders' talk of "the good old days." No doubt the children of the first cave men had to listen to stories of the happy times when living out of doors made it unnecessary to keep the cave tidy and when the enervating luxury of fire had not undermined the virility and digestion of ape man. And no doubt even in the ice age such tales cut no more ice than they do nowadays.

Naturally young people want to take advantage of every comfort and convenience which their era brings them; if they didn't, civilisation would stand still. Though every modern invention is not necessarily itself "an advance in civilisation," it is a sign of man's surging spirit and of the instinct to improve his lot which distinguishes him from the rest of the animal world.

But there is an element of truth behind the repinings of the Elders. It is doubtful whether people who can't be bothered to go to a dance unless a car takes them, enjoy the dance when they get there as much as their grandmothers used to enjoy the rarer and humbler affairs they walked or bicycled miles to reach; acting, reading aloud and music at home were probably every bit as pleasurable as the cinema and wireless. Oddly enough, even our pleasures seem more satisfying when they have cost us some effort and energy and enterprise.

Many members of the Land Army have discovered a new delight in using their own brains and skill in acting, dancing, handicrafts and other such diversions, and new satisfaction in sharing in general efforts to meet the needs and wishes of the community, whether it be a village or a hostel.

Our grandmothers were often wise by chance, their granddaughters have the much harder task of being wise by choice.

M. A. P.

FARM SECRETARY

A POST-WAR CAREER FOR LAND GIRLS

Post-war planning is very much in the air just now, and some of the members of the W.L.A. are wondering what prospects the future holds for them of peace time employment on the land. For though no doubt the majority of girls will wish to return to their old jobs, there are still many who feel it is impossible to return to indoor work again.

Naturally the thought of small-holding is uppermost in every mind. But not every girl has the capital to set up as such, and fewer still have either the experience or temperament necessary for this difficult and hazardous career.

How, then, can an ex-land girl earn a living in the country? Dairy work and horticulture probably hold out the best prospects, but I want here to suggest a comparatively new career, that of farm secretary. Estates and large farms have, of course, always employed a permanent secretary, but such jobs are few and far between and only a few girls can be lucky enough to obtain such posts.

The type of farm secretary I have in mind is somewhat different; one can almost say, in fact, that it is the war that has brought her into being.

We are promised price control and Government help in farming for several years after the war—and Government help, unfortunately, means forms, and form-filling is a job heartily detested by farmers. Naturally a small farmer cannot afford to employ a permanent secretary for his form-filling, book-keeping, stock registers, milk-recording and such-like. But he would welcome the help of a reliable girl for such work once or twice a week, and a girl could soon work up a connection between four or five farmers in her district.

A term or two's training in book-keeping and shorthand would be necessary for this job, but it would not be very costly. Beyond this, all that is really wanted is a bicycle for reaching isolated farms, though a portable typewriter, which could be strapped to the carrier, would be useful. There will probably be a large number of these on the market second-hand after the war.

Because the idea is somewhat new (and farmers are notoriously suspicious of anything new!) a girl may not find it easy to get started with a job like this. Therefore it would be a wise move on the part of anyone thinking of taking

it up after the war, to begin making enquiries now from local farmers, outlining the work required and trying to obtain a promise or two of employment when ready—beginning with her present employer.

Payment would naturally vary with the work done. It might be by the day, or half-day, or at so much an hour. I hesitate to offer any hard and fast rates, but I would suggest from 1s 2d. to 1s 6d. an hour. Probably the days with different farmers would have to be rotated, so that the same farmer did not always have to pay his secretary's insurance contributions—small points like this count a good deal with a farmer!

Lest the objection be raised that this, after all, is really an indoor job, let me present a third type of farm secretary—one for which I can vouch for personally, as it worked well on my farm. At the beginning of the war we employed a secretary five mornings a week. With the shortage of labour we cast round for another milker, and suggested to the girl that she should work afternoons on the farm. She was soon drafted into the dairy for the afternoon milking and washing-up, and it proved a great success. The books were kept up to date, and we had the extra milker needed and the girl thoroughly enjoyed working outside for part of the day.

Now there are many dairy farms where extra help is needed for the afternoon milking to save taking a second man off other work, and I think a girl could find useful employment on one farm as secretary-cum-farm worker. And if she is an early riser and doesn't mind the extra hours, she could milk twice a day, rear the calves and do the indoor work between whiles.

To sum up, here are the three types of farm secretaries that I have outlined.

1. Permanent secretary to an estate or large farm.
2. Part-time (or travelling) secretary to several farmers.
3. Secretary-dairymaid on a single farm.

So take your choice, land girls, and pioneer a new career for yourselves.

Glos.

A. B. Lane, D.R.

This month's cover design by E. Wright, 73902, won first prize in a W.L.A. Handicrafts Exhibition in West Suffolk.

IF YOU WERE A LAND GIRL IN BRAZIL

Have you ever thought of what it would be like to work in a foreign country? My uncle has told me about many of the things that he experienced while he lived in the Parana State of Brazil.

The soil is rich and practically all our farm crops will flourish and grow most strongly. So do the weeds! The crops suffer from blight a great deal. Sometimes the ants attack and clear whole beds of plants by taking them away in tiny pieces including the stalks. It is not unusual to stay up all night fighting against such pests.

It is a tropical country and has the usual rainy season. Occasionally a typhoon passes, pulling up great pine trees, lifting off roofs and destroying all in its path, leaving a clearing like a very straight road. There are several things to be very wary of, not least of them being the snakes. These and the wild boars will chase anyone who is unfortunate enough to be in their vicinity. Although the wild boars roam in the forest, they are owned by people and it is illegal to shoot them. However, there are quite a few that find their way into sausages, when they are troublesome.

One of the greatest terrors is a forest fire. This is caused by the sun lighting the dry grass on the prairie which quickly spreads to the forest. There is only one thing to do when you hear it coming and the rabbits, lizards, monkeys and other creatures come fleeing past. Everything inflammable must be cleared from a piece of ground upon which you lie flat so that the flames will sweep clear overhead, leaving you intact, but very warm and sweaty with nothing but desolation around.

Fortunately, these troubles are not daily occurrences and there are plenty of consolations. Apples, pears, peaches, oranges, bananas, melons, strawberries, grapes, besides about ten other fruits unknown in this country, grow very big and juicy. Some grow wild, while others have been raised from seed sent from here. Blackcurrants grow like blackberries and there are two types. One is good to eat and the other deadly poisonous. The difference is only distinguishable by the leaves.

The Brazilians are very kind and helpful people. They do not pick up English words and ways very quickly and have strange customs. They have no crockery or cutlery; the food is merely placed in a heap; the men eat first and

the women have what is left. The men usually travel by horseback, while the women trudge alongside carrying their babies.

After all, I don't know whether I would like it in Brazil, but these and other things my uncle has told me have aroused the spirit of adventure and curiosity that is within us all.

W. Sussex. E. M. Whitehead, 136763.

A FARMER'S DAY

It is a cold winter day and I am hedging by the roadside on the Eleven Acre. The wind is in the East and blows with icy relentlessness through my many clothes. My fingers are numb with cold, my feet even colder. This is what the older labourers call "A Farmer's Day." To-day you must either work or grow steadily colder and colder! I am working. The postgirl cycles along the road, red nosed and blue cheeked. Two carters pass by, their horses' breath rolling forth on the cold air. The men do not ride to-day with lazy legs dangling, but stride briskly along by their horses' heads. Masses of heavy clouds are slowly gathering, and as the first sharp scatter of hail falls I start to run, wondering if I shall ever be warm again. How I would enjoy one stolen day of summer warmth!

* * * *

It is harvest time in this same field, and eleven acres of golden oats lie motionless under the merciless sunlight of one of the hottest days of the year. The heat hangs heavily overhead. I am binding the ripened oats as they fall from the mowers' scythes. It is nearly noon and as the sun climbs steadily higher, so the rhythmic strokes of the scythes grow slower. Sweat gleams on all our brows. The can of once cold water is passed round yet again. Teasing flies torment us. Over all hangs a breathless heat-hush, and as I push my lank damp hair from my face, I wonder if I shall ever be really cool again. Oh for the tang of a cold snow-wind on my burning cheeks!

* * * *

And now the wintry shower has passed, and as I walk down the hail-whitened field back to my roadside hedge, Shelley's words are running through my head:—

"We look before and after
And pine for what is not."

Lancs. M. Watson, 58613.

THE LAND GIRL



KITTEN CAPERS

Articles of every description have been written about each animal on the farm, except that very important member of the community—the farm cat. Perhaps it is because she “walks by herself,” that the rest of the animals, being of a herdlike disposition, look at her askance, and “leave her be.”

We have four of the best ratters ever on our farm. They are very prolific, and at regular intervals they present us with families, which have of necessity to be drowned. Everyone shirks the job, so eventually the Land Girl with many a silent sob, and swallowing a large lump in her throat, does the dirty deed.

One day Bandy, the mother of our hero, presented us with six of the best. One of them, a handsomely striped ginger, showed definite signs of a strong character, inasmuch as he was always first to the feed, and in the warmest place. The Land Girl decided to keep him, and in due course to present him to her landlady's young son. On the second day of his life he was solemnly christened with two drops of milk—“Snookums” for all official purposes, and in company,—

“Snooks” for the intimacy of the family circle.

The first week of Snookums' life was definitely monotonous. It comprised feeding, sleeping, and yowling for his Ma on her infrequent absences. On the eighth day his eyes were fully open—large, blue and deceitfully beguiling. He had no objection whatever to be handled, provided he was allowed to crawl to the most inaccessible place round one's neck, and dig his claws in as hard as possible.

Very soon he decided that there must be more to the world than just the walls of his box; so one morning, while alone, he retired to the furthest corner and hurled himself at the top. The result was a very small kitten hanging midway. He could go neither forward nor backward, and after spitting indignantly—just hung.

The Land Girl, seeing his plight, put him to the ground, whereupon he immediately dived behind the nearest cornsacks, from whence he flatly refused to be tempted. From that day his box was ignored with adolescent contempt.

As the days went by the barn was fully explored; and the hole in the door through which his mother and aunts came and went, attracted his attention. He

THE LAND GIRL

scrambled through, and rather doubtfully sat on the sunny patch of concrete outside, still with a wary eye on the door should an emergency arise.

Each day he gradually ventured further along the causeway, and eventually he reached the cowshed door. He watched furtively round the corner—warily padded another yard—Susan flicked her tail and Snooks retired precipitately, spitting ferociously, on other urgent business.

At four weeks old he thought it was about time he learnt the gentle art of lapping. After planting two feet firmly in the milk (it didn't matter which two, so long as there were two), he totally immersed his nose, and proceeded gleefully to blow large bubbles. Upon settling down to serious business, however, he could soon outpace the grown-ups.

Now it is time for Snooks to change his home. He is grown to a fine and very handsome young man. He has but one failing, and that is his total lack of any sense of space. When he wishes to descend he simply launches himself into the ether with a truly philosophical resignation as to which end arrives at the bottom first. The Land Girl has her doubts as to what the outcome will be should the roof-tops be attempted, but by the ninth life perhaps he will have learnt the lesson of bitter experience.

Lindsey, Lincs.

J. Barber, 36846.

WITH THE SHEEP IN THE HILLS

It was a lovely morning as I climbed into the car at 7 a.m. to go into the hills to roll sheeps' wool. Our destination was Glenmore 31 miles north of our Hostel in Invergordon and as the miles rolled past, the scenery became more enchanting.

When we got on to the Struthie we were high above sea level and across the water we could see Ben Wrachie mentioned in the song "My Grannie's Hieland Home." Passing through Strathcarron with its few cottages scattered here and there, we drove along by the River Carron, with its fine salmon; on our right was a deer fence, and I watched closely through the trees for deer, but was unlucky. I did see a roe but the elusive animal didn't like our faces and hurriedly moved off.

The road became a mere track as the hills got closer and often I thought I would go through the roof of the car. Eventually we got to the Glen, and I have never seen a lovelier sight. On each side of our sheep pens ran the Car-

ron, now not much more than a stream and mountains surrounded us.

There were thirteen shearers, shepherds coming from surrounding districts to lend a hand. Seven hundred and fifty sheep had to be sheared that day and our farmer was pleased he had got such a grand day. A fire was started for the food and the shepherds got their clippers sharpened and got down to business. The hoggs were done first and our own shepherds went off with the dogs, who could almost do the job themselves, for the ewes and lambs. The clippers sang out and calls for buist filled the air, and three of us were kept busy rolling. I have never seen sheeps' wool come off so fast. It was fascinating watching the men who handled the sheep so easily.

11.30 was a welcome break for dinner. Jokes were exchanged by the men, some of whom hadn't seen each other since the previous year. After dinner the lambs were separated from the ewes and the job was started once more.

The sun had been very hot all day but about 4.15 the shepherds began to glance anxiously at the hills which were getting very misty. Soon the rain started and we had to rush to cover the bags of wool with tarpaulins it became a torrent and thunder rumbled fiercely; all thought of shearing had to be abandoned with still 100 sheep to be sheared. I arrived home much earlier than I expected with a pair of stag's antlers which had been cast during the winter and I wouldn't have missed my day in the hills for worlds.

Scotland.

N. McLaughlan, 15663.

WANTED.—Riding Jacket, preferably brown or brown check, bust 36 ins.—Reed, W.L.A. Hostel, Portland House, Whittlesey, Nr. Peterborough, Northants.



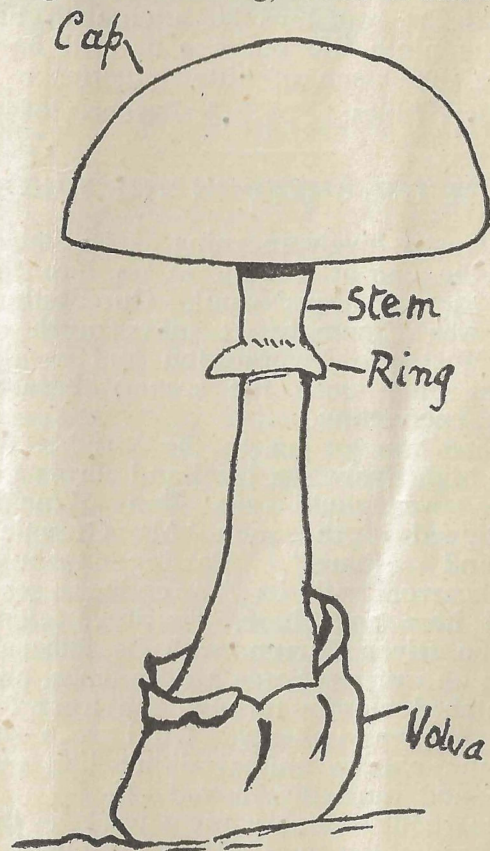
F. Sculthorpe, 77167. (Leics) with friends

FUNGI.

Dr. Roger-Smith has very kindly written the following interesting article for the LAND GIRL. Before the war Dr. Roger-Smith travelled in many countries, collecting Alpine plants but now he has turned his attention to British fungi

I wonder how many of my readers have ever taken any notice of Fungi? Very few I venture to think. I lived down in Surrey for twelve years and was not conscious that there were any fungi in the neighbourhood, then my interest was aroused by a wonderful exhibit of fungi at the Royal Horticultural Hall by Dr. Ramsbottom, and I was so ashamed that I did not know a single specimen, that I started to study them and last year identified 187. It is a true saying that the eye sees what the eye wants to see. If you start looking for fungi you will find plenty of them in the Autumn almost everywhere. Damp woods are a favourite situation for them to grow in, but many are to be found in the open fields, such as the common mushroom and the Fairy ring fungus. The very large majority are edible and not more than eight or nine are really poisonous. Before venturing to use fungi for food it is essential to get to know them just as you know the wild flowers and never eat one unless you know it. Reject utterly the rule of thumb tests as that if a fungus peels freely it is safe, if it turns a silver spoon black when cooking it is poisonous, that only those growing in the open are safe etc. These so called rules are worthless and dangerous, the Death Cap the most poisonous of all would pass all these safe tests. The trouble is that at the moment there are no general books of fungi with coloured plates, for it is essential for a beginner to have good coloured pictures to distinguish the different kinds. The few books that have been published are all out of print and there seems little chance of new editions being issued. But there has recently been published a very useful little book on Edible Fungi by Dr. Ramsbottom in the King Penguin series with excellent coloured illustrations of some 20 different kinds and with the aid of this small volume you can safely start eating fungi, if you stick to those actually figured. Later with more experience you can safely extend your choice. In a recent article in the "Times" Dr. Ramsbottom said that in the last year he and his friends ate 150 different species without any unpleasant results. When you have got into the habit of looking for

fungi, you will be surprised what a variety there are, and with the exception of about eight, all of them are edible, though that does not mean all are worth eating, some are too leathery, some have an unpleasant taste and some are too small to trouble about. Most of the larger fungi consist of a cap supported on a stem and on the under side of the cap are a number of radiating plates called gills, or a number of small holes called pores, or prickles and on these gills or pores or prickles the spores are formed by means of which the plant propagates itself, they correspond to the seeds of flowering plants. The only actually deadly British fungus is the "Death Cap" which belongs to the order Amanita. The characteristic of this genus is that they all start life enclosed in a membrane called the volva, so that in the baby stage they look like a soft shelled egg. As the fungus grows it breaks through this covering, which is left as a



AMANITA phalloides
"The Death Cap"

sheath round the base of the stem. The young fungus also has a membrane called the veil which extends from the edge of the cap to the stem, the purpose of which is to protect the tender gills and the precious spores, as the cap expands this veil breaks from the cap and sticks to the stem in the form of a ring, which you are familiar with in the common Mushroom but in it there is no basal sheath or volva. All the members of the Amanita genus are with one exception poisonous and are easily recognisable by the volva. The bright scarlet fungus with white warts on the cap is very poisonous it is called the Fly Agaric, as it used to be used in fly papers. The "Death Cap" has a rounded cap pale yellowish green in colour, white gills and stem and well marked ring and volva, it grows mostly in woods and is quite unlike a mushroom, yet it is this fungus, always mistaken for a mushroom, that is the cause of all the fatal cases of fungus poisoning. Apart from acting as an article of food, fungi have many other useful functions. It is not generally known that our forest trees are dependent on fungi for their existence. If young fir trees, beeches, oaks etc are planted in fungus free soil they would die. It is now known that it is the mycelium threads of some of the larger fungi that combine with the fine roots of the trees that in some way, at present not fully understood, contribute to their growth. Then all the yeasts are minute fungi and are employed in bread making and the fermentation of wine and beer.

The various forms of the mould Penicillium are responsible for the ripening of cheese and the special variety Penicillium notatum is the new drug Penicillin that is saving the lives of so many of our wounded and Pneumonia cases. There are countless other instances of the use to which fungi are put, but it may amuse you to know the Hottentot ladies use the spores of a local fungus as a face powder. It must be admitted on the other hand that fungi do a vast amount of damage. The Dry Rot of damp wood that at present is doing so much damage to bombed houses, is an instance, then the Black Spot of roses, Club foot of the cabbage family, Leaf curl of peaches etc., the Smut and Rust of corn are all instances of fungus disease. It is now known that the damping off of seedlings is due to a fungus and many more instances of the damage they do could be

mentioned but enough has been said to show what an important part the study of fungi plays in our every day life.

Heartiest congratulations to R. Gilby 37595 Northants who came out first in an open tractor ploughing match in which there were 30 entries, including 26 men of whom 15 at least were experienced ploughmen. She won the silver cup awarded for the best work in the competition. Miss Gilby, who is employed by the W.A.E.C., never used a tractor until she joined the W.L.A.

And to E. Jarrett 85541 E. Sussex who won an open championship in ploughing in face of at least 20 male competitors; B. Brown, 40950 Worcs. who also won an open championship in ploughing; M. Wilford 13511 Leics. who won an open ploughing match at Market Bosworth, and K. Dobson, 100259 Bucks who won a prize for the best furrow in a mixed ploughing match.

Also to K. Titchener 25687, Berkshire, and M. Hawkins 86250, West Suffolk who both showed courage and presence of mind in helping to extricate and render first aid to members of the crews of aeroplanes which crashed near where they were working.

And to J. Remington 29357 Surrey who showed great courage in rescuing a child from an infuriated cow. Miss Remington will soon have completed 5 years in the W.L.A.

And to three hostels in the W.R. of Yorks who gained 100% in a good-time-keeping competition run by the W.A.E.C.

And to D. Rawlings, Yorks, W.R., who saved two stones of twine while cutting bands during one day's threshing. And most of the bands were cut close to the knot making their re-use possible.

INVEST ONE COUPON AND KEEP DRY

In a pair of Industrial Leather or Rubber Topped Wellingtons, or wartime model Shoes or Gloves. For farmers and food producers. Pliable wax dressed uppers, pull-on loops, foot-shaped Beechwood soles. Welts leather bound. LIGHT, WARM, comfortable. Send stamped addressed envelope for list.



L. TWEENWAY, LTD., Horley, Surrey

THE LAND GIRL

A SPECIALLY bound presentation copy of Miss Sackville-West's book was sent to Her Majesty The Queen on behalf of the Women's Land Army by Lady Denman, Honorary Director. The following letter has now been received.

December, 26th. 1944.

Buckingham Palace.

Dear Lady Denman,

I am commanded by The Queen to thank you and the Women's Land Army for Miss Sackville-West's beautifully got up book. It depicts so charmingly all their activities and shows how valuable and how diverse their work has been.

To all members of the Land Army the Queen sends her best wishes for 1945.

Yours sincerely,

Lettice Bowlby.

ON BAIL

I worked on a Bail during the first two years of the war and have never met another Land Girl who has milked by that same system. This is not altogether surprising, as it cannot be said to be the most attractive form of dairy farming from the cowman's or the cowwoman's point of view!

I found without a doubt that the weather offered the chief disadvantage. But in late Spring and early Autumn there were days when one felt there was no life to be compared with it for health, peace and happiness—away at the far end of the farm on the rolling South Downs with not a soul in sight and a psychological cowman, his cows, horse and dog as one's companions. (I have found most cowmen to be psychological!)

But there is another aspect—out before 5 a.m. groping around a field in rain or snow trying to find the horse to harness and put into the milk float—all by the light of a torch. Silence usually reigns over these proceedings. 5 a.m. is not very conducive to chatty conversation. When we reached the field in which the Bail stood our dog was sent ahead "to fetch 'em back." While the cows were being rounded up I would open up the 'pen' adjoining the Bail, then fix up the milking machine and light the boiler fire. Many a morning we arrived to find the pipes frozen. The first six cows were led in from the pen through a gate into the stalls, chained up and prepared for milking. As each one was stripped, so they were led out into the field again by means of a sliding door at the back of the Bail. Milking finished, the machines were washed up in

cold water and then in hot, produced by a steam pipe leading from the boiler into a churn of cold water. Water had to be carted in a barrel every other day, not only for washing up, but for cooling the milk. This was my particular job while the cowman carted hay or straw out into the field to leave the cows contented while we had our own breakfast.

In dry weather moving the Bail is quite an easy operation, but on soggy or frozen ground it isn't. One of the greatest races against time I have ever experienced was when trying to thaw out one pair of wheels by pouring boiling water over them, before the other pair had frozen again, and what heavenly relief when we saw the Bail moving with every hope of the pulley block holding in the ground! As a very last resort we would sometimes have to send to the farm for help with the tractor. There were often minor breakdowns and all kinds of amateurish engineering was performed to get things to go again. We used to experience a grand feeling of conspiracy if it was achieved without the "boss" knowing anything about it!

On our big moving days we'd pack up all the tackle and trundle off complete with family in search of pastures new. This happened about every three weeks and we were always very glad to see the job done.

I am glad to have experienced life on a Bail but I can say truthfully I am glad that it is in the past!

Oxon.

B. Leal, 29110.

A series of five Broadcast Talks to farmers, on machinery, will start on alternate Thursdays on 11th Jan. in the Home Service. Mr. Clyde Higgs will act as compere.

THE LAND GIRL



A Land Army stall at a Derbyshire cinema during the shewing of "A Canterbury Tale."

FITTING IN TO VILLAGE LIFE (5)

We have been concentrating on communal activities lately, so this month let's go back to things one can do by oneself.

Nature Study sounds Fourth Formish and is so obvious when one is in the country that it seems hardly worth mentioning, but it is likely to be overlooked for that reason. Here we are, surrounded by birds, beasts and plants with a real opportunity to study them as never before. The field is so enormous, you can take your choice, but I recommend taking a wide scope—never mind about becoming an expert at any one thing. Get a good bird book ("Name This Bird," by Daglish, is one of the best) and a good flower book (Bonnier's "Name this Flower" is excellent) and perhaps a book on trees. Animal books are so numerous it is best to get a selection through the library. Start by making sure of a few easy birds, flowers and animals and extend your knowledge gradually. Go birds' nesting with the village boys; you'll learn a lot, and teach them too, if only to leave the eggs! Don't think your study need be dormant in the winter. Wild things are tamer then, and you can get a lot of fun out of studying their tracks in the snow or mud. See if you can persuade an old hand to take you

rabbiting with ferrets, or ratting with a good dog. Nature study may start in the Fourth Form but it's a subject which occupies the whole time of scientists, and it's enormous fun every inch of the way.

Then there's archaeology and geology. I was started on this by finding fossils when I was harrowing. A little later I picked up a perfect flint arrow-head. Things like that whet your appetite. Local societies will be glad to help you, so will the county librarian with books. The subject may seem dry, but it is endlessly fascinating.

From what I know of fellow-photographers, they won't need any urging. Film shortage will be their woe! But the pictures they do get will be treasures for the rest of their lives.

I could have devoted a whole article to any one of these things and to half a dozen others, but there it is; there just isn't room for more than a few reminders and suggestions.

Cambs. E. M. Barraud, 9600.

Special consideration will be given in future to volunteers with three or more years' service in the Land Army, who are working away from home but who want to transfer to their home counties. Application should be made to the County office of the County in which the volunteer is now working.

THE LAND GIRL

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

I am always interested in the accounts of other people's work, so I wonder if anyone would like to hear something of mine? For the last eight months I have been training new recruits in Hand Milking and all that goes with Dairy work. Once the girls know which end of a cow gives milk, everything is plain sailing, and there are not many that are not keen and really love the work within the very short time they are here.

We have twenty-five cows at the moment and a whole bunch of calves at different stages of growth. Monday is always a busy day, when at least one new trainee arrives, and has to be put through the usual routine of grooming, washing, milking, or trying to milk a cow! Then there is the cleaning and sterilising of our dairy equipment; most of the girls are nervous of the boiler, and need convincing that it is anything but dangerous and will not blow up if it is used properly. So far I have trained forty-eight new L.G.'s and it is a grand feeling when they leave here and go to take their place amongst the army of cow girls.

W. Sussex. D. E. Runacles, 38788.

Dear Editor,

In our district (Wrotham) we have recently formed a Young Farmers' Club. We get a great deal of pleasure out of it, and also find it very instructive, and I wondered whether any other L.G.'s who are keen on farming would like to do the same.

We began by collecting together various young folk, our Area Organiser came down to address us and wished us luck. We have an Advisory Committee of Farmers and such-like helpful people, and a Club Committee. During the winter we are having a series of lectures on different branches of farming interspersed with open evenings—games, dances, socials, etc. We are having a Brains Trust with Dartford Y.F.C. and are going carol singing at Christmas. We have "adopted" a farm, and hope to run a football team. During the summer we had farm visits, debates, and ran a cricket team. A very enjoyable social and supper was held, and we went to the Inter-Field Contest at Sissinghurst in October. At present we are merely "on probation" but when we have proved ourselves worthy, we hope to be affiliated to the N.F.Y.F.C. To girls who are interested, the name of their Area Organ-

iser, or Local Club may be obtained from N.F.Y.F.C. Headquarters, Oaklings, Canons Close, Radlett, Herts.

W. Kent.

M. Baxter, 62953.

Dear Editor,

I have been in the W.L.A. 2½ years and I enjoy every minute of my work and my boss is the best man under the sun to work for I'm sure. I milk and look after the calves which are just like children.

I should also like to include a letter to Miss Sackville West for the most excellent book she has so ably written for us.

Leics.

F. Sculthorpe, 77467.

(From an employer about his gang workers)

Dear Madam,

I should not like the two girls who topped my sugar-beet to pass completely out of my life without my writing to put it officially on record how splendidly they worked. It was a hard and extremely unpleasant job and the way they stuck to it right up till five o'clock was simply beyond praise. They were obviously great workers themselves, but I cannot help wondering whether they did not gain from the W.L.A. something of the spirit which made it possible for them to tackle this beastly job and stick to it on a farm which they had never seen before and will never see again.

Oxon.

A. Nicholson.

It is very nice that many members of the Land Army have received verses praising their work from friends in the Forces. Unfortunately, space problems prevent the publication of these tributes in the LAND GIRL but volunteers will be glad to know how much their service is appreciated by the men of the fighting Forces.

An interesting letter was received by the Editor some time ago signed "Land Girl in Charge," but without giving any clue to the writer's identity. The envelope bore the post-mark of Barnsley in Yorkshire. The Editor would be glad if the writer would communicate with her, giving her her name and address.

Although names and addresses will not be published in the magazine if the writers ask that this should not be done, the Editor cannot print any letters or articles unless she is informed of the name and address of the writer.

THE LAND GIRL

I LENT A HAND

A Soldier sits and dreams of me
In far off, hostile lands.
But, how I only hope and pray
His dream excludes my hands!

The winter cracks my hands; they're
blue.
They're red 'neath summer's sun.
They're only white when picking
sprouts
With frost on, makes them numb.

But they can grip a spade all day—
A prong to pitch a load;
Can swing a tool relentlessly
Until a crop is hoed.

The nails are stubbed from grubbing
weeds
The palms are stained with grime.
The backs are scorched, with peeling
skin,
From when I broadcast lime.

But they can swing a sack of spuds
Upon my back with ease;
And prick a tiny seedling out
Without a bruise or squeeze.

So when my soldier's home again,
And sees my brawny hands,
He must remember what they've done
And show he understands.

Wilts.

L. Watkins, 64277.

Will the volunteer who forwarded 34s. for the pullover advertised in the November LAND GIRL to "58547" c/o Editor. at the beginning of Dec., but whose letter has not been acknowledged, please communicate with the Editor?



Picking beans in E. Sussex. E. Nye. 87914 (left) and friend.

"The Bachelor," by Stella Gibbons. (Longmans, 10s. 6d.)

"Charity begins at home, but it is often more convenient to exercise it upon foreigners. Miss Constance Fielding—found that it was one thing to keep open house for any educated and internationally-minded Indian or European—but quite another thing to give hospitality to a mother and two little girls bombed out of Hackney." This passage near the beginning of "The Bachelor" conveys the agreeable tartness of a story of war-time shifts and discomforts, very funny to read about, if less amusing to experience. The plot of the book is that very common one—a lively and tempestuous stranger intruding into the family life of conventional middle-aged persons firmly set in their habits. This time the bolt from the blue is a semi-barbarian maiden, refugee from Barania, an imaginary Balkan state, who can be got rid of only in the last desperation, because, after all, it is she who lights the fires, cooks and washes up. But the plot, with its incongruously sweet ending in three happy couples, hardly matters in such a variety show of characters and incidents. Incidentally, Stephen Martin is the only Communist I can remember to have met in fiction (outside Russian, that is) who is also attractive.

M. Jaeger.

How are you getting on with your entry for the Winter Competition? Have you got well started on **your** Local Speciality? Information about sending in entries will be given in the February number; new (or forgetful) readers can obtain from the Editor, LAND GIRL, BALCOMBE PLACE, SUSSEX, full particulars of this competition which was first announced in the October issue of the LAND GIRL, page 1.

Please note that the address of the Women's Employment Federation is 2, Cromwell Place, London, S.W.7. It was quoted as 7, Cromwell Place in *The Women's Land Army* by V. Sackville-West.

FOR SALE.—Scotch wool cardigan, bust 34 ins., 18/-, also ladies' blue shirt (like W.L.A.) 20/- good condition. 58547, Vine Farm, S. Suffenham, Oakham. Rutland.

FOR SALE.—Pair Ladies' Brown Riding Boots, size 7 (small) £2.—Ellison. Helm Farm, Bowness, Windermere, Westmorland.

THE LAND GIRL

SCOTTISH NOTES

ABERDEENSHIRE.—At a conference held recently in Marischal College, Aberdeen, on the Young Farmers' Club Movement there were three speakers, Mr. Miller, Director of Education for Aberdeenshire, Mr. Morrison, Director of Education for Kincardineshire and Miss Margaret Wilson, L.G. from Kinross-shire. After the first two speakers had discussed the value of these clubs to young folk in the country and the part they should play in the life of the community in the future, Miss Wilson described how a new club had been started at Portmoak, a club of which she is now secretary. In a most interesting talk she told of the difficulties they had had to face, the success they had achieved and the many interesting talks and competitions which had been held at their meetings.

ABERDEEN & ELLON.—Jemima Lawrence who has completed five years in the Land Army has contributed 30s. to the W. & B. Fund. She earned this money by working in her neighbours' gardens in the evenings.

ALFORD & DEESIDE.—A dance was held in the hall at Kincardine O'Neil in aid of the W. & B. Fund, organised by C. Robertson and G. Emslie. Among other prizes presented for raffle was a silver fox fur given by Mrs. Walsh who also did the draw. Prizes were presented by Mrs. Cook. During the evening C. Robertson was presented with a G. S. Badge for 5 years' service.

ANGUS.—The W.L.A. members at Craigeassie in the Tannadice district have raised £56 for the W. & B. Fund.

DUNBARTON & RENFREW.—Two dances were held in this area recently—the Paisley L.G.'s Club ran one in Paisley. It was an exceedingly successful dance. With the proceeds of this dance they are proposing to entertain the men from Erskine Hospital. The other dance was held at Helensburgh and was organised by the Helensburgh Land Girls' Club. This was also an exceedingly successful affair. The proceeds of this are being used for the Club.

WEST FIFE & KINROSS.—**Kirkcaldy:** A dance was held in The Girls' Club, when a raffle was drawn. As a result of the dance and raffle they handed over £105 to the W. & B. Fund. The entire proceedings were organised by Mrs. Meiklem, Bennoch Park, Kirkcaldy and the Land Girls of Abbotsfield Hostel, Kirkcaldy. **Culross:** Balgownie Hostel held a dance in the School Hall, Culcross, as a result of which they handed over £10 5s. to the W. & B. Fund. A great deal of work was put into both these efforts and all credit is due to the girls and their helpers.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.—The members at the Hostel, 7, Terregles Street, held a whist party in the Hostel on the 15th November. There were 12 tables and, as a result, the wounded soldiers in Dumfries Infirmary will benefit. The sum of £10 is to be sent to the Fund for providing gifts at Christmas. Mrs. Anderson, Warden, and the Members received great support from those interested in the Hostel and for that they are very grateful.

WEST LOTHIAN.—M.O.I. Speakers on foreign countries are much appreciated by W.L.A. members at Foxhall Hostel, Kirkliston. Miss Alison, a Scottish lady, who lived in Belgrade during the German occupation, visited Foxhall Hostel on 6th November and gave a most interesting talk on Yugoslavia and the suffering and heroic struggle of her people.

ROXBURGH.—The Town Hall was packed for the concert given by Land Girls in the district in aid of the W.L.A. Welfare and Benevolent Fund, which benefits to the extent of £47 6s. 1d. There was a popular chorus by Land Girls, in uniform, followed by tapdancing, songs, two monologues, sketches, Scandinavian dances, piano selection, recitations and items by the Modernairs Band. On the call of Miss Sheila Marr, votes of thanks were

accorded to Mr. Carlton, an E.N.S.A. producer who had given such valuable assistance, and to Miss Watters, who acted as compere and who had worked so hard to ensure the success of the concert.

STIRLING & CLACKMANNAN.—A very successful Club has been opened in the Girl Guide Hut, Stirling, on Monday evenings, for volunteers from Stirling district, including West Perthshire. Country Dancing classes are held once a fortnight. The attendance so far has been about 35 each evening, and everyone is very enthusiastic about the club.

A very successful dance was held in the Golden Lion Hotel, Stirling on 8th Nov., at which £140 was raised for the W. & B. Fund. This is Stirlingshire's best effort so far, financially.

L.G.'s in the Buchanan area of Drymen organised a dance in aid of the Buchanan "Welcome Home" Fund, at which they made the sum of £10 6s. 6d.

W.T.C. NEWS

Recently an interesting excursion arranged by Mr. Hunt of Redhill Hostel, was made to Malvern to hear a Concert by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Everyone in the party, whether musically experienced or not, enjoyed the programme ranging from Mendelssohn to Dvorak.

The Concert was followed by sight-seeing in Malvern before the party journeyed back to Hereford.

At Boyton and Hayne Hostels film shows and dances have been numerous and successful, and an ENSA show at Boyton was described as exceptionally good. There was also a party at Hayne to which British soldiers and convalescent American Servicemen were invited.

Near Puddletown the Timber Corps have been visiting British and American wounded at a nearby hospital and entertaining those sufficiently well to be allowed out. Puddletown and Warminster have also arranged highly successful dances which have considerably benefited the Benevolent Fund.

Finally, although it took place some time ago, a word about a visit to St. Michael's Mount described by one of the Timber Corps girls working on the estate of Lord St. Levan, its owner. The girls were lucky in having a fine day for their excursion, and thoroughly enjoyed exploring the Mount. The trip took place on a Sunday, and when they had finished their tour of the Mount and had seen everything of interest, they were welcomed to the service in the Chapel.

County News

LONDON & MIDDXX.—Pest Destruction Tests were held in Sept., and three entrants J. Myers, J. Broed and J. Brunt all passed with distinction. Mr. Baylis, Assistant Technical Adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture who examined at this Test, wrote to tell us how pleased he was with the high standard these volunteers had reached. At the Tractor Driving Tests held in Nov., Miss Coopey gained distinction with 92 marks. There will be more Tests in the Spring, and we hope there will be a good number of entrants. Harrow Club had a lovely outing at the Harrow Coliseum recently when the management generously allocated seats at half-price. Many members of this Club are joining the recently formed Y.F.C. at Harrow. Laleham Club is going strong and has several interesting lectures and gay evenings arranged. E. Judd 42168 sends an interesting account of a calf which arrived prematurely and which showed considerable reluctance to live. Nine Hampton volunteers have made over £29 for P.O.W. by carol singing; and each contributes weekly to the Benevolent Fund. J. Coopey 37100 has sent an interesting account of her struggles with her tractor ploughing in the wet weather.

MON.—Hostel dances and Christmas parties are in full swing. Mount Ballan Hostel had a gala week with a variety show produced and acted by

THE LAND GIRL

members of the hostel, a fancy dress dance and a Christmas Bazaar, Hillcrest hostel gave a most enjoyable party, Llanvapley Court a dance, and another at Llangattock Manor raised £14 for the Benevolent Fund. Other charities have also benefited: Raglan hostel has sent eight pounds ten shillings to the Prisoner of War Fund, proceeds of a dance, and Llandeud hostel, which has, in one month, organised dances and raised £4 5s. for the Red Cross Agricultural Fund and £3 5s. for the Prisoner of War Fund, has been warmly praised by the local press. A C.E.M.A. concert given by the English Singers was greatly appreciated by girls of Mount Ballan hostel. At the Royal Horticultural Society's autumn Show in London, Newport Parks Corporation was awarded the Silver Gilt Knightian Medal, the highest award given at the Show. We congratulate the Corporation's 9 L.A. employees in general and S. Thompson, 51527 and E. Sellick, 91044, who assisted at the show, in particular. In the early spring we intend to hold a W.L.A. drama festival for our would-be-actresses.

NORFOLK.—Proficiency tests in general and field work were held on Mr. Brighton's farm at Newton Flotman, on November 23rd. Of the nine entrants all successfully passed. A very good report has been received from a Labour Officer of the N.W.A.E.C. on the work of the girls employed by them working in gangs from W.L.A. hostels. Outstanding are 300 acres of potatoes planted, and 820 tons lifted, 150 tons of apples picked, and 500 acres of sugar beet chopped and singled. 20 miles of drainage schemes, and 8 miles of hedging. He ends with the report, "The W.L.A. Girls are in my opinion doing their bit and sometimes more. What the farmers think about them in my districts can, I think be gathered if I just quote the usual remark they make at the conclusion of any argument or discussion 'Well, I don't know what we should do without them.' " During the month £52 17s. was raised in the County for the Benevolent Fund; of this amount £16 was sent by the Drayton and Taverham girls, proceeds of a dance and £3 from the Volunteers at Crow Hall. Nearly 100 new subscribers have been obtained for the LAND GIRL, by sending out surplus copies to non-subscribers. Much interest has been created with good results.

NORTHANTS.—Most Hostels are arranging Xmas parties and at Thornhaugh all the girls are having a Carol Service in the Church before the supper and dance which is being arranged for them. Much help has been given to the Benevolent Fund by members of the W.L.A. and their Representatives and friends, who have been kind enough to arrange dances and other social events in aid of it. A very interesting Conference of County Committee members, Representatives and Officials from the County Office was held in Northampton on Oct. 31st under the Chairmanship of our County Chairman, Lady Spencer. The great debt which this County owes to its Committee Members and Representatives emerged very clearly from this Conference. We are very proud of R. Gilby mentioned elsewhere.

NORTH'D.—Among Hostel activities this winter, Mrs. Ord has arranged for Cookery Demonstrations by the Ministry of Food, which are much appreciated. It is hoped that all Hostels will be represented at the Drama Festival at The Little Theatre, Gateshead, on April 14th. Further details will be announced later. Mr. Gordon Lea has already visited several Hostels now forming teams for the Festival. Those who are not actually performing are asked to give support by buying tickets, (obtainable from Mrs. Ord). The proceeds will be in aid of the Benevolent Fund. Preliminary arrangements are being made for the Spring Series of Proficiency Tests. All those with the necessary one year's good service behind them are encouraged to send in their names. There was a very satisfactory number of candidates at the

Spring Series last year, and very few failures. The tests are not a really alarming ordeal. Ask any of the girls who have taken part! Those who have any intention of making Agriculture their career after the War should make use of this opportunity of giving themselves some qualification.

NOTTS.—There has been great activity in this County to raise money for the Benevolent Fund. A great number of the Hostels have had dances and whist drives and Farndon had the unique idea of a Jumble Sale by which they raised £40. A Christmas Fair was held in Nottingham on the 9th Dec. A great many of the lovely toys were made by the girls themselves, also some very nice embroidery and raffia work. Farmers in the district made a good thing of the produce stall. A three weeks old calf was brought in and auctioned for £30, the whole grand total being £850. Hawksworth Hostel's War Saving record for the year is £201 3s. A Conference was held at Bingham Hostel on Dec. 2nd and 3rd by the Y.W.C.A. Four girls were invited from each Y.W.C.A. Hostel and the W.L.A. Chairman, County Secretary and Organisers. A very enjoyable week-end ensued with lectures, discussions and games and large and excellent meals so well organised by Miss Gardener and her staff at Bingham.

PEMBS.—This Autumn has been remarkable chiefly for its rainfall! However, despite the weather about 15 L.G.'s on Land Drainage work and on outlying farms managed to get in to Narberth one Saturday afternoon for a Club meeting arranged by our Chairman, Mrs. Sackville-Owen and Mrs. Wyndham Collins, D.R. The volunteers had an excellent tea followed by an exhibition of most skillful conjuring by Mr. H. Codd of Milford Haven. On Dec. 16th there were further festivities in Narberth when a very successful dance was held for the Benevolent Fund. Leatherwork classes have been going on at Pentypark Y.W.C.A. Hostel; two farm girls and several Hostel Volunteers are making bags, gloves and writing cases. We hope after Christmas to start classes at other Hostels. Priskilly W.A.E.C. Hostel is busy rehearsing for a New Year Pantomime. The Hostel is gay with Christmas decorations, one bedroom even having a Christmas Tree. Mrs. C. M. Davies, District Rep. very kindly entertained the Haverfordwest Volunteers at her house one evening this month. We have had several applications from farmers for L.G.'s and we hope to welcome some new volunteers in 1945.

SOMERSET.—District Representatives were delighted to meet Lady Denman on Oct. 17th, when she came to Weston-super-Mare and discussed W.L.A. matters and attended a meeting of the County Committee.

By November, the second set of Proficiency Tests were completed. Of the 94 volunteers who entered, 76 were awarded Badges and 18 gained distinction. Winter activities have been many. Cookery Classes have been popular and hostels at Stogumber, Old Cleeve, Bishops Lydeard and Williton are learning to be good housewives in the future. Slipper making classes are going on at Churchill and Brent Knoll Clubs and at Old Cleeve hostel and Drama Classes at North Petherton. We had an all too short visit from Miss Jutta, who spoke to Flax Bourton and Williton hostels and the Axbridge Club on Wool and the British Empire, and her own exciting experiences. Christmas parties were many; it was a nice plan on the part of Springfield Maltings to combine an Ensa show with a good party for their farmer friends. Over 17,000 tickets were sold for a Christmas Draw which produced the splendid sum of £420 for the Benevolent Fund. Grateful thanks are due to all our hard-working ticket sellers and generous prize donors.

STAFFS.—Clubs and Hostels have been very active arranging social evenings and dances. Uttoxeter Club have again scored top marks by raising £50

THE LAND GIRL



Warwickshire on parade.

at their dance, this was a most enjoyable evening. Harvest dances were held at Lichfield, Seisdon and Brewood. Lea Hall Hostel held a Fancy Dress Dance at Knighton and after much racking of brains and hurried stitching, many good costumes were displayed. One of our oldest members has again raised £6 6s. for the Benevolent Fund by an individual effort. Congratulations to all who worked so hard to make these functions such a success. Wall Heath Hostel celebrated its third birthday by giving a party and Lea Hall Hostel opened its social year by inviting their friends from nearby R.A.F. and American units to a social evening.

E. SUFFOLK.—Another Proficiency Test in Field Work and one in Hand Milking have been held since Nov. 25 girls passed, distinctions being gained by E. Bailey (Field Work) and L. Duncan (Milking). Altogether, 133 E. Suffolk volunteers have now won a Proficiency Badge, and we hope to give many more the opportunity to do so in the New Year. Henstead Hostel L.G.'s are honoured to hold the special certificate awarded for the inter-Hostel three-monthly War Savings Competition. For this period, they have the splendid record of having saved £197 1s. 5d., an average of 10s. 6d. per head per week. They also worked magnificently for a Sale of handicrafts on Nov. 29th, which raised £30 for the Benevolent Fund. Another grand Sale of Work, organised by a joint Norfolk and Suffolk L.G. Club, held at Bungay on Dec. 12th, cleared more than £70. Our very special thanks go to Mrs. Wortley (D. Rep.) for her encouragement and untiring efforts on behalf of the L.A. At Eye on Dec. 16th we held the third of our W.L.A. Variety Concerts. The Area School was packed, and the show went with a tremendous swing. The Oak Lawn Hostel L.G.'s provided the chorus, and there was some exceptional dancing and singing, led by Tony Buller and K. Docherty. L. Godbold and D. Last (Henley) entertained us again with their Suffolk duologue, and May Rose (Columbyne Hall Hostel) by her skill as a solo pianist. Over £40 was raised for the Benevolent Fund.

W. SUFFOLK.—Our Handicraft Exhibition when the Marchioness of Bristol kindly presented the prizes, was a great success. The star turn was

the Fairisle berei designed and knitted by J. Gifford 118588, which won the judges' special prize, the Women's Institute have offered to buy it for their Exhibition loan collection. Our Benevolent and County Welfare funds have benefited lately by some very successful parties. Shimpling hostel sent £20, and Little Bradley, with only 7 volunteers, raised £10; Hadleigh Club, a regular supporter of the funds sent a further contribution. Banquets have been popular at two hostels. Lakenheath had a Harvest Home dinner and Risby celebrated their first anniversary with an Xmas dinner. CEMA gave special Carol concerts for three of our hostels. The W.A.E.C. have once again offered volunteers wishing to take their Proficiency tests a special two months' course at Shimpling during Dec. and Jan. A Ploughing Match for Tractor drivers is also being arranged for which all volunteers are eligible.

SURREY.—The drive to raise at least £1000 for the Benevolent Fund has brought in over £2,800 and those who have contributed to this splendid effort are very much to be congratulated. The money has been raised in many ingenious ways and Sales and Dances have proved very successful. The County Office held a Sale in Guildford which brought in over £114. Congratulations are due to Epsom and Ewell, Pyrford, Mitcham, Oxshott, Puttenham, Tilford, Shackleford, Peperharrow, Clendon, Merrow and Ewhurst on achieving their Targets and to Thames Ditton and Effingham who have nearly done so and to Thursley, Chertsey, Addlestone, Ashted, Barnes, Esher, Malden, Molesey, Richmond, Sutton, Weybridge, Godalming, Old Byfleet, Hindhead and Surrey Lodge Hostel on raising more than their Targets and for a large additional sum raised at Ham. The following W.A.C. Hostels have also done very well:—Coombe End, Old Vicarage, Sachel Court, Dial House, Nower Lodge, Surrey Hills and a splendid effort by White House, Buckland. Four very successful C.E.M.A. performances were given by three artists, Pianist, Singer and Dancer at Godstone, Ashted, Dorking and Sachel Court. The programme was very much enjoyed and it is expected that the next Tour by CEMA to be given during the week beginning Feb. 12th. will attract much larger

THE LAND GIRL

audiences. Full details will be announced later.

E. SUSSEX.—It is with great regret that we have had to part with Lady De La Warr and Mrs. Lowman—after five years of such a happy association we all feel the wrench very much indeed, but in Mrs. Brooke, our new County Chairman, we have someone who has also been working tirelessly on behalf of the volunteers as a Committee member since the beginning of the War, and has proved herself a great friend to a considerable number of E. Sussex members. We therefore extend to her a hearty welcome and assure her of our loyal support. A series of successful Christmas Parties, attended by Lady De La Warr and Mrs. Lowman, have been held. At the Lewes party, organised by Mrs. Brooke, the Office staff gave an amusing sketch. Highest marks for "proficiency" are due to Mrs. Lowman for compiling a Crossword Puzzle for a Benevolent Fund Competition, a copy of "The Women's Land Army," signed by the Hon. Miss V. Sackville West, being the prize. Proficiency Tests have been held in general farm and milking. A good percentage were successful. In a Red Cross Ploughing Match at Ashburnham on 9th Dec., E. Jarrett won the open championship in the face of at least 20 male competitors! In the L.A. class, first prize went to J. M. Lade, second to B. Goldie-Taubman and third to Joyce Smith.

W. SUSSEX.—The main event in the past two months has been the first meeting of a Land Girls' Council to be held in this County, which was held at Chichester on 25th Nov. Over 60 delegates attended; it was a delightful and informal meeting brilliantly "chaired" by the Hon Mrs. Burrell (County Chairman). We were very much honoured to have with us Mrs. Lea, O.B.E., J.P., (L.A. County Chairman for Worcestershire) whose talk delighted the meeting. The discussion was wide and varied, and afterwards the meeting adjourned to an enormous and very good tea at the Y.W.C.A. Perhaps the most important part about the Council was the amount of discussion of every kind of question which it led to at the Club and Hostel meetings held to prepare for it. The first Improvers' School organised for the L.A. in this County was held by the W.A.E.C. at Battine House Hostel in October. It was attended by 12 girls employed by the W.A.E.C., of whom two, Miss J. Glover (Red House, Bosham) and Miss M. J. Rose (Yapton Hostel) gained distinction at the final examination. Everybody seemed to enjoy the course immensely, the only complaint being that it was too short. Proficiency Tests have been held in milking and also in Horticulture, and a series of three advanced talks on Dairy Farming have been given by Mr. Beard of the W.A.E.C. in Horsham, and a similar series will be given in Chichester in the New Year. Clubs continue to flourish and C.E.M.A. has sent us two tours.

N. WALES.—To mark the occasion of her marriage Mrs. Mervyn Williams was presented with a beautiful handbag and cheque from the N. Wales Committee and Anglesey Representatives, at a party, given by Miss Griffith at the Valley Hostel, while a gift to Mr. Griffith Jones, former Executive Officer of the Anglesey W.A.E.C. was made by the L.G.'s. Mrs. Wynne Finch's highly successful Concert at Pwllheli, a special Whist Drive at Valley with various Cinema Collections have all brought good contributions to the Benevolent Fund. The special Christmas Party given by Mrs. Burbridge at Glynllifon Hostel was thoroughly enjoyable and there is news of numerous other parties and dances throughout the area. A special mention of Bala whose thrift handwork is outstanding and a challenge to us all; 1944 has been a year of good work generally by the L.A. in this part of the world and we wish them, their employers and District Representatives "Blwyddyn Newydd Dda."

WARWICKS.—Thanks to all the hard work done by L.G.'s, District Representatives and Staff,

our Benevolent Fund Week total has now passed £4,000, with still more money coming in. L.A. hostels in the county have sent in contributions amounting to £585, and we send our special congratulations to four of the smallest—Eathorpe, Temple Grafton, Studley and Wolston,—which have all raised totals of about £3 per volunteer. Dances, sales and special activities in towns and villages raised a total of £2,517; donations and collecting tins brought in over £166, and the county Draw £820. Mrs. Holland and her helpers at Henley-in-Arden made a record with their dance by raising £260; Alcester W.L.A. club sent in £120 and the Marston Green Club £111 15s.; whilst Mrs. Godfrey's stall in Birmingham market raised over £90 and her Bring and Buy sale at Shenstone over £73. Many other grand local efforts were made. The W.L.A. County Bazaar, opened at the Regent Club, Leamington, on Oct 28th by Lady Willoughby de Brooke with Stalls and side-shows run by Clubs, hostels and D.R.'s, raised over £200 for our Fund.

WILTS.—Clubs and Hostels are busy with preparations for Christmas. Trowbridge Club has had classes in slipper and toy making and sold the toys amongst themselves and others, the proceeds going to the Benevolent Fund. Two Bowerchalke girls, D. Carter and M. Harryl, with the help of their D.R. made soft toys which they sold for £6. The Benevolent Fund 'drive' still goes on and, thanks to hard work put in by D.R.'s and members, money comes in steadily. D. Brumwell, when she received her two-year armlet, "which she is proud to wear," sent in 10s. for the Benevolent Fund, "as a token for my pleasant two years in the W.L.A." One new club has been opened at Whiteparish, but many have closed down. The tendency now is to concentrate on domestic subjects, cooking, toy and slipper making and "make do and mend"—girls evidently are preparing for making homes after the war.

WORCS.—On Dec. 8th., Worcestershire was very glad and honoured to have a visit from Mrs. F. C. Jenkins, C.B.E. She inspected the County Offices and talked to the staff. Afterwards she attended the monthly meeting of the County Committee and in the afternoon addressed a meeting of District Representatives.

It is with very great regret that we announce the death of Mrs. Aubrey-Cound, a member of the County Committee, who was killed by an Army lorry whilst driving her car. She will be sadly missed in the County and we extend our deepest sympathy to her husband and children.

The Pests Department of the W.A.E.C. announces that the record for rats destroyed at one poisoning was 133, made by L.G.'s Pullen and Rollinson. These girls have apparently broken their own record as we hear they have now destroyed 190 rats at one poisoning. Can anyone beat this? The Anglo-American Discussion Group, under the auspices of the British Council, was invited by Lady Lechmere to a most enjoyable party at Seven End, Hanley Castle. Sixty members participated in carol singing dancing and a marvellous pre-war supper.

YORKS. E.R.—A Whist Drive and Dance was held on Nov. 24th at Burton Pidsea in aid of the Benevolent Fund. Mrs. Peggy Bradley, was responsible for a delightful evening, aided by W.L.A. members and their friends in the village. A duck, eggs, cakes and biscuits were auctioned. Raffles also proved a great attraction. Refreshments were served in the interval between the Whist Drive and the Dance, and a short address was then given by the Committee Member, Mrs. Miller, on the necessity of the Benevolent Fund. The splendid total of £25 was raised. The girls at Howden Hostel raised £5 for the Benevolent Fund by a dance on Nov. 16th., and another successful dance organised by Mrs. W. Chapman and Miss M. Parker, was held at Holme on Spalding Moor on Dec. 15th, when £17 was raised for the Benevolent Fund. Many kind friends in the village provided the refreshments, and two fowls given by two local farm-

THE LAND GIRL

ers were raffled. A further series of Proficiency Tests was held recently in Dairy work, and J. Hayman-Joyce passed with distinction.

YORKS. N.R.—Whist Drives, Dances, Concerts and many other efforts all in aid of our Benevolent and County Welfare £1,000 drive have been and are being planned. At present it cannot be stated exactly how much has been raised towards our target but in addition to the usual ways of raising money, some girls have collected money by unusual ideas—Ida Jeffs and Mary Banks collected 10s. by the sale of rose hips gathered during their lunch hours, Dishforth Hostel organised a "mile of pennies" on the road outside the hostel, and Sylvia Swanwick sold a handbag for £1. The County Office staff are also having their efforts and so far have raised £73 by a dance and Christmas draw.

It was with regret that we heard of the death of Edna Armstrong—she had only been in the W.L.A. for a short time and our sympathy is extended to her parents in their sad loss.

YORKS W.R.—On Dec. 2nd a big crowd gathered at the County Office, when the County's three months concentrated effort to raise money for the Benevolent Fund opened with a Christmas Fair and Bring and Buy Sale. The stalls were laden with Christmas Gifts and toys of every description, the majority of which had been made by members of the Office Staff with the help of volunteers and Representatives. Over £200 was raised, and everyone decided that it had been a most enjoyable and successful afternoon. The Second Series of Proficiency Tests have now been held, and a very high standard of work was reached. 60 out of 66 volunteers passed the Tests, 7 gaining distinctions. Congratulations go to O. Wheeler (92383) and J. King (110299) who raised £53 8s. for the Benevolent Fund, at a Whist Drive and Dance at Bardsey. Birthday and Christmas Parties are in full swing at our Hostels, the most recent being held at Holden Clough, Thorpe Audlin, Moat Hall and Knaresborough. Many of the volunteers in Hostels or attached to W.L.A. Clubs have been very busy this autumn knitting dark green pullovers for the children of liberated Europe.

BENEVOLENT FUND

On December 31st the Fund totalled £109,087. The monthly total was £3,097. KENT still has the highest total of £6,740, and SURREY the highest monthly total of £612. SURREY'S contribution is the latest addition to their drive which has now reached the splendid figure of £2,816 18s. 11d.

E. SUSSEX' grand total of £493 19s. 7d. was raised chiefly by the raffle for H.M. The Queen's silver cigarette box and the jade necklace presented by Mrs. Tew, £75 from the Office Toy Sale and the magnificent sum of £200 from the two-day Sale, organised by Mrs. Scott, of her own paintings and also of toys made by volunteers in the district. E. SUFFOLK also deserve a special mention for their splendid total of £219, the principal item of this being the £90 raised by the Christmas Prize Distribution.

Dances and entertainments have been in full swing during the Christmas season and have contributed over £1,000 to the total this month. Among the splendid results obtained by this means are nearly £100 from SALOP, £39 from GLOS., £34 from W. SUFFOLK, £30 from DORSET and the same sum from E. YORKS, £27 from STAFFS, £25 from LEICS and RUTLAND, and £23 from DEVON. HERTS sent £88 which included nearly £77 from a concert organised by the W.A.E.C. in appreciation of the work of the Land Army. A cheque for over £81 came from NORFOLK and BRECON and RADNOR'S draw for a length of hand woven tweed brought in £20.

County Returns

County	Ben.	F.	Total	Em- ployed
	£.	s.	d.	
Kent	6740	14	1	3787
Essex	5233	14	11	3062
Surrey	4470	0	3	2155
Hants.	2191	18	11	1939
Yorks., W. Riding	1224	6	5	1933
Leicester 1608	1761	14	0	1862
Rutland 254				
Herts.	4027	5	3	1859
East Sussex	3018	12	4	1830
Northants.	2386	0	8	1759
Somerset	1890	9	4	1676
Devon	3129	11	7	1643
Worcester	2386	14	3	1604
Norfolk	3232	10	10	1596
Sussex West	3375	8	2	1584
Warwick	2516	13	9	1526
Cheshire	1606	9	1	1437
Cornwall	991	1	3	1377
Wilts.	1391	13	0	1368
Lancs	966	11	4	1366
Northumberland	1726	4	0	1253
Gloucester	1222	17	11	1236
Notts.	497	3	0	1181
Yorks N. R. 1g	528	3	5	1148
Hunts 261	3471	4	7	1093
Cambs 507				
Ely 325				
Berks	1390	3	11	1073
Beds.	963	17	5	1033
Suffolk East	1969	14	4	1026
Oxon.	3548	17	2	958
Salop	1481	8	10	948
Yorks, East Riding	317	3	4	933
Durham	1365	7	2	865
Lincs. Kesteven	1216	18	3	823
Dorset	1020	18	0	731
Lincs. Lindsey	600	6	0	689
Glamorgan	710	2	11	674
Hereford	1220	4	1	638
Monmouth	642	17	5	624
Suffolk, West	1444	14	6	588
Lincs.—Holland	959	4	7	571
Denbighshire	552	17	11	563
London & Middx.	801	6	4	534
Flint	558	9	7	526
Wales, North	1404	18	5	517
Pembroke	975	1	2	368
Isle of Wight	156	19	11	329
Cards & Carmar	576	15	5	318
Brecon & Radnor	340	6	0	265
Montgomeryshire	302	13	11	245
W.T.C.	4168	19	1	2925
Bucks	4533	1	1	Not rec'd
Cumbs. & West'd	519	1	0	"
Derby	1071	19	9	"
Staffs	1315	5	7	"

On 29th December 1944, the total number of volunteers in employment was approximately 63,800.

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WAR ECONOMY LABEL